A WORD OF

REPROOF

TO THE

Teachers of the World.

Which may be of use for the tryal of their wayes, and standing, that all who are willing to be undeceived may come to an understanding to know what sort of men in this Nation they are who serves not the Lord Jesus Christ but their own bellies, who in words professe God and the SCRIPTURES, but in life deny both.

With an invitation and warning to them and all people to turn from iniquity, and serve the living God, whose service is not known, but in the light; neither is any service or worship accepted by him, but as it is acted in obedience to his measure which is light, and hath lighted every one that cometh into the WORLD.

Howl ye shepherds, and cry, and wallow your selves in the ashes, ye principal of the flock; for the dayes of your slaughter, and of your dispersion are accomplished, and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel, Jer. 25. 34.

Written by a friend to all people, and a lover of the light, and the wayes thereof, whose outward name is STEPHEN CRISP.

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THis is written to go abroad amongst the Pariſh Teachers and their Flocks, and is ſerviceable for them to conſider of; for the Lord God of heaven and earth is ariſing in his mighty power to plead the caſe of the poor and needy, and to deliver the Lambs from the teeth of the Wolves and the Lyons who catch for the prey, and to make a ſeparation in the flocks of the Idol Shepherds, and behold his voyce is uttered from Zion, and his word goeth forth from his holy habitation, who dwels in the light, and in it is his voyce heard, which ſhakes the earth, and makes its inhabitants to tremble.

Therefore all people feare the Lord, and mind that of him that reproves ſin & evill in the ſecret of your hearts which is the grace which hath appeared unto all of you; but hath not yet taught all of you to deny ungodlineſſe and worldly luſts; but in the luſts of ignorance do remain, looking at a man without you to be your Teacher, and ſo knows not the Lord to be your Teacher: And for your ſakes who are ſimple, in whom there is any honeſt deſires, is this given forth, that you may ſee your Teachers tryed by their own rule, and found too light and too narrow: Therefore all be warned for time to come, and in the fear of the Lord will you come to know the beginning of that wiſdome which comprehends all thoſe heaps of Teachers which feeds the itching ears.

S. C.

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A word of

REPROOF

TO THE

Teachers of the World.

THIS word is unto you, oh ye Prieſts, in vain is all your coverings; For the light of our God is riſen, and hath diſcovered you; and his power hath rent, and is rending your coverings, and his controverſie is proclaimed againſt you; and he hath brought forth his little Army, which is little in your eyes, but is a mighty hoſt in the power of his Spirit, upon whom he is fulfilling his promiſe; that *one ſhall chaſe an hundred, and ten ſhall put a thouſand to flight*; And as our fore-fathers did, ſo do we (in this day of our God) *by faith turn to flight the armies of the aliens, and ſtop the mouths of Lyons, and obtain promiſes*, &c. and you your ſelves are witneſſes in your practices; who are not able to ſtand, but flee when ever the life of God ariſeth in any to ſpeak to you, though in never ſo contemptible an inſtrument in your eyes, and ſo have many hundreds of you been put to flight without ſword or ſpear; and then you run from your God and from your worſhip to the houſe of your Armory, where you are fitted with the weapons of the Beaſts warfare (as whips, ſtocks, priſons, and ſuch like) in whoſe Army you are found fighting againſt the Lamb and his Army; by whom you ſhall be overcome, and your carkaſſes caſt into the open field. And now is your works of darkneſſe and great ſwelling words of vanity brought to the light, and there tryed and judged, which is our rule to try and judge withal: And ſeeing you ſay the Scripture is your rule whereby things ought to be tryed and judged; you and your works ſhall be tryed by the Scriptures alſo, that ſo you may be condemned by both.

First, ye ſay ye are Miniſters of Chriſt: Nay, but ye are his Miniſters whom ye ſerve and obey, and whoſe work ye do; now ſin is the work of the Devill, and to deſtroy it in the fleſh was Chriſt made manifeſt in fleſh: and you that deny the deſtruction of ſin in this life, you deny it in fleſh; for he that departeth this life, goeth out of the fleſh, and leaveth it, and ſo you deny the work of Chriſt, whoſe Miniſters you ſay you are; and he is no ſervant nor Miniſter of Chriſt, who denies his work. Now read and conſider, ſin and the man of it is againſt Chriſt; and the Miniſters of him who is againſt Chriſt, always ſtrives to keep up, and to uphold that which Chriſt and his Miniſters ſtrives to deſtroy and throw down, which is ſin in the fleſh; and ſo here it is plain that you who ſtrive to uphold ſin, uphold Anti-chriſt, whoſe Miniſters ye are.

Again, Chriſt ſaid to his Miniſters, *Goe yee forth*, &c. But where is your going forth? when ſome of you have purchaſed to your ſelves places, and ſome have gained by flattery, and ſome do hold by force & tyranny a certain place, circuit, or quarter from whence ye ſeek your gain, and there are not aſhamed to ſue by title, as Rector, Incumbent, or Lecturer of ſuch a place. Oh horrible! that ever ſuch ſhould ſay they were Miniſters of Chriſt: Yea, and ſome of you can boaſt and glory in your ſhame, ſaying in your Declarations, you have been there in ſuch a place ſome 20. ſome 30. ſome 40. years. Was ever ſuch a thing heard of concerning any of the Miniſters of Chriſt? were not they approved in their Miniſtry by tryals, by travellings, by hardſhips and dangers both by Sea and Land, in want, in heavineſſe, &c: But you have choſen the pleaſures of ſin, and to live at eaſe in the fleſh; but deſtruction and miſery ſhall overtake you in a day when you are not aware, who will not be warned.

Again, Chriſt ſaid to his Miniſters, *All power is given unto me, and I am with you:* He did not ſay, all power is given unto me, and I will give it to the Magiſtrates: and if any come to oppoſe you or your Doctrine, go to him, he ſhall defend you; but they had the witneſſe in themſelves, and the power was with them, and is with them to the end of the world;

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which ſtops the mouths of gainſayers; which power is the power of Chriſt, which the Miniſters of Chriſt have according to promiſe; and the power of Anti-chriſt, the Miniſters of Anti-chriſt have, which is manifeſt in perſecuting, in violence, in tumults, and ſuch like; which power is your defence, who ſay, ye are Miniſters of Chriſt, and are not; but are Miniſters of Antichriſt, and ſo proved lyars and condemned, and witneſſed againſt, both in the light, and by the Scriptures.

2ly. You ſay you preach the Goſpel.

Nay, that is not the Goſpel of Chriſt you preach, *but another* which he that bringeth is accurſed: For, *the Goſpell of Chriſt is the power of God unto ſalvation to them that believe*; but what you preach is not ſo, no not to them that believes it, who preach that they cannot be ſaved: So if they believe what you declare, they muſt believe they cannot be ſaved while in this life: And ſo it is not the power nor Goſpel of Chriſt which you preach; but the power of darkneſs to keep all in death out of the faith, which gives victory, and through which the creature comes to know the Goſpel, and the power which ſaves and redeems up to God.

Again, the Goſpel is everlaſting, and none can preach it but they who have received it; but you whoſe knowledge ſtands in carnall Arts and Sciences, and Inventions, which came in time, and muſt periſh in time; your knowledge cannot receive the everlaſting Goſpel when it is preached unto you, much leſſe preach it unto others: and in that knowledg do you corrupt your ſelves and others, and are like to periſh in your corruption together, except ye turn to the light which was before corruption, that it may ſhew you corruption, and lead you out of corruption, that ye periſh not; for to ſuch as are in the periſhing way which is corrupt, the Goſpel everlaſting is hid.

Again, that which you preach is not free nor without charge; but the Goſpel was ſo, and is ſo: & as long as the force and violence, and pride, and covetouſneſſe is found amongſt you, which makes that which you preach burthenſome and chargeable to the people, ceaſe calling it the Goſpel of Chriſt

Christ; for if you do call it so, the light in all consciences condemns you, and the practice of Christs Apostles condemns you, and the Scripture declares against you, and your condemnation is just, and shall abide for ever.

3ly. You say you preach the Truth:

Nay, that is not the Truth you preach, for it sets none free; for many have abode in your doctrine and worship a long time, some 20. some 40. and some 60. years, and yet are not set free; but you have brought them to believe that they cannot be freed, and so have caused them to erre from the right path, and such may dye in their iniquities; but their blood will be required at your hands who have beguiled and deceived them.

But Christ Jesus the light of the world, *who lighteth every man that cometh into the world, that all men through him might beleve.* He said, *If ye abide in the truth, the truth shall set you free.* He is the light, the true light, and the truth that sets free; and you who deny the light *that lighteth every man that cometh into the world,* and yet say you preach the truth, you are lyars, and the lake is your portion except you repent.

Again, what you preach you sell, and so are declared against expresly in Scripture, seeing you say you preach the truth: For what saith it? buy the truth, and sell it not. Read your condemnation all you who make bargains for that which you call truth; and let the light in your own consciences judge, whether you doe not deny Scripture, yea or nay.

4ly. You say, he that preacheth the Gospel ought to live of the Gospel.

I answer, He unto whom the Gospel of Christ is committed to preach, none can hinder him of living of it, for it is his life, and he needeth not an outward law to hold up his livelyhood. Neither did any that ever preached the Gospel make use of any such power; but their power they had, and they have alone from Christ Jesus, both from the inward and outward support: Have we not power to eat? have we not power to drink, saith the Apostle, who was a Minister of Christ? but he had not power to make bargains with any people

people for a certain eſtabliſhment of a ſum of money, and then to ſeek for an Augmentation beſides, as ſome of you do, and then to ſue at law for default of payment; and if it were payd, then to ſpend it in voluptuouſneſs upon his luſts as you do: Some in the luſt of drunkenneſſe and gluttony, and ſome in pride in ſatisfying your luſts in cloaths and in building, and ſome in covetouſneſſe, making a god of money: So you have choſen to your ſelves gods which ſhall periſh with you, and they ſhall not ſave you; but your nakedneſſe and your ſhame the light hath diſcovered, who have refuſed to be covered by it: and while ye live in pride and gluttony, in envy and covetouſneſs, in ſtrife and contention, this is not to live of the Goſpel; but this is the fruit of the corrupt tree which is for the fire.

5ly. You ſay, the Labourer is worthy of his hire.

Yea, but he muſt have it of him that ſets him to work, and hath profit by his work. Now he that worketh for one man, and would have hire of another, who ſet him not on work, this is unreaſonable; and ſo is it for a man to exact wages for his work, when none hath profit by his work, as is ſeen at this day among you Prieſts, who are out of the reaſonableneſſe and good order which moſt men beſides your ſelves are in this reſpect.

Therefore be aſhamed and amend your ways, and *labour with your hands the thing that is good, that you may come to eate of the fruit of your labour, and be ſatisfied*, and be not always like the greedy dumb dogs that can never have enough; For now is the day come which hath declared your work, and you are comprehended and fathomed, and meaſured with an equall line, and your coverings are too narrow, and the feet of your image is ſmitten, and the ſtone is increaſing to fill the whole earth; and then ſhall not your place be found, and the recompence of your labor will be deſtruction, wo and miſery which ye ſhall receive of the hands of the righteous God, the Judge of Heaven and Earth, who will judge every one of you according to your doing. And then ſhall all your hard ſpeeches which ye have uttered againſt the innocent be returned into your own boſomes, and ye ſhall know that ye

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were warned, and the light in your consciences shall in that day testifie unto Gods righteousnesse in your destruction.

This is given forth from the spirit of Truth, for the manifesting and rebuking of the spirit of error, and written in obedience to the commandement of the Lord in the yeare accounted, 1657.

S. C.

THE END.